

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 822

By Black

A RESOLUTION requesting the department of safety to devise an emergency management plan for the Tennessee general assembly and the capitol area complex buildings.

WHEREAS, on April 16, 1998, a tornado struck downtown Nashville, damaging the War Memorial Building and leaving most of downtown without power for many hours; and

WHEREAS, on that day of chaos and turmoil, the General Assembly had no established emergency plan in place other than that which the personnel director devised at the time; and

WHEREAS, during legislative session, the halls of the legislative plaza become very congested with members, staff, lobbyists and citizen guests resulting in a recipe for disaster if there was ever an emergency situation that required an evacuation; and

WHEREAS, in the times in which we live today, it is only prudent to be conscious of security and have a plan in place to, at least minimize, the chances of such an incident; and

WHEREAS, the large number of people in a confined area makes the legislative complex a prime target for anyone intending to do harm to public officials or others; and

WHEREAS, the combination of a large group of people, stress and long work hours also greatly increases the chances of a medical emergency occurring; and

WHEREAS, because the legislative complex has now expanded into four buildings (the Legislative Plaza, War Memorial Building, Capitol and Rachael Jackson Building,) the need for a comprehensive emergency plan covering all the contingencies that may occur is long overdue and much needed; and

WHEREAS, the current security for the legislature is now provided by the department of safety in the form of state troopers so it seems logical that safety is the appropriate department to devise a legislative security plan; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that the Department of Safety is respectfully requested, in consultation with the speaker of the senate and speaker of the house of representatives, or the designee for each speaker, to devise a comprehensive emergency plan for the General Assembly, with any such plan including contingencies for weather-related, and medical emergencies as well as for security against people entering or attempting to enter a building in the legislative complex with the intent to commit a criminal offense, disruption or harm therein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Commissioner of the Department of Safety.